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UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT
Eighth session
Pre-Conference Meeting of Senior Officials
Cartagena de Indias, Colombia
6-7 February 1992

ANNOTATED AGENDA OF THE PRE-CONFERENCE MEETING OF SENIOR OFFICIALS

Note by the UNCTAD secretariat

The purpose of the Pre-Conference Meeting of Senior Officials is to settle as many as possible of the organizational, administrative and procedural matters of the Conference itself, including agreement on the geographical distribution of posts for the officers of the Conference and its sessional bodies.

I. AGENDA

1. Election of the Chairman of the Pre-Conference Meeting of Senior Officials

2. Procedural and organizational arrangements for the Conference

   (a) Inaugural ceremony

   (b) Opening plenary meeting

   (c) Election of the President (item 2 of the provisional agenda of the Conference)

   (d) Election of Vice-Presidents and the Rapporteur (item 4 of the provisional agenda of the Conference)

   (e) Credentials of representatives to the Conference (item 5 of the provisional agenda of the Conference)

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(f) Schedule of participation of persons of Ministerial or equivalent rank

(g) General debate (item 7 of the provisional agenda of the Conference)

(h) Establishment of sessional bodies (item 3 of the provisional agenda of the Conference)

(i) Allocation of items

(j) Officers of sessional bodies

(k) Meetings facilities

(l) Timetable of proceedings

(m) Report of the Trade and Development Board to the Conference

(n) Friends of the Rapporteur

(0) Format of the report of the Conference

3. Report of the Pre-Conference Meeting of Senior Officials to the Conference.

II. ANNOTATIONS

Item 1 - Election of the Chairman of the Pre-Conference Meeting of Senior Officials

In accordance with past practice, the Meeting of Senior Officials may wish to elect the current President of the Trade and Development Board to serve as Chairman of the Meeting of Senior Officials.

Item 2 - Procedural and organizational arrangements for the Conference

(a) Inaugural ceremony

An inaugural ceremony, to be arranged by the host country authorities, will be held on Saturday, 8 February.

(b) Opening plenary meeting

The 221st (opening) plenary meeting would be opened on Saturday, 8 February by the head of the delegation (Zimbabwe) from which the President of the previous session was elected (rule 16).

(c) Election of the President (Item 2 of the provisional agenda of the Conference)

The President of the Conference will be elected at the opening plenary meeting of the Conference. It is understood that the President of the Conference would be the Head of the host country's delegation.

(d) Election of Vice-Presidents and the Rapporteur (Item 4 of the provisional agenda of the Conference)

In accordance with rule 22 of the rules of procedure, the Bureau of the Conference will consist of 35 members, comprising the President and Vice-Presidents of the Conference, the Chairman of the main Committee and the Rapporteur of the Conference. The Conference would need, therefore, to elect 32 Vice-Presidents.

The Conference may wish to decide that the composition of its Bureau should be based on the same geographical distribution as that of the Bureau at its seventh session, i.e. seven members from Africa, seven from Asia, seven from Latin America, nine from List B, four from List D and China.

In accordance with the rotation of officers of the Conference, the Rapporteur of the Conference would be a representative of one of the States in List A.

Past practice has been for the chairmen of sessional bodies and for coordinators of regional groups to be fully associated with the work of the Bureau of the Conference.

(e) Credentials of representatives to the Conference (Item 5 of the provisional agenda of the Conference)

It is proposed that, in accordance with established practice, the Credentials Committee to be established under rule 14 of the rules of procedure be composed of the same nine States as were appointed by the General Assembly to serve on the Credentials Committee at its forty-sixth session, i.e. Belgium (Chairman); Belize; Chile; China; Lesotho; Russian Federation; Singapore; Togo; and United States of America.

In accordance with past practice, the Conference may wish to decide that, should any of the above States not be represented at the Conference, the regional group concerned be requested to nominate a replacement.

(f) Schedule of participation of persons of Ministerial or equivalent rank

Governments would, as far as possible, designate as heads of delegation persons of Ministerial or equivalent rank, and a schedule for their participation would be established, so that their presence could be used to best advantage.

(g) General debate (Item 7 of the provisional agenda of the Conference)

The general debate would be opened on Monday, 10 February 1992, and would continue until the list of speakers is exhausted, possibly until Friday, 21 February.

In accordance with rule 39 of the rules of procedure and with guidelines approved by the General Assembly, the Conference could decide on a time-limit for interventions by representatives of States and for statements by other participants to be observed during the general debate. UNCTAD VII observed a time-limit of 15 minutes for interventions by representatives of States and 10 minutes for other participants. The Meeting of Senior Officials may wish to consider whether a lower time-limit might be advisable in view of the shorter duration of UNCTAD VIII.

Outside of the time allocated to the general debate, plenary meetings would be convened on an ad hoc basis, as required, for addresses by Heads of State or Government.

It has been proposed that a segment of the plenary on the afternoon of 11 February 1992 be devoted to the consideration of LDC issues, including (i) Review of progress in implementation of the Programme (Trade and Development Board resolution 390 (XXXVII) of March 1991) and (ii) Implications for the Programme of additions to the list of LDCs (General Assembly resolution 46/206).

(h) Establishment of sessional bodies (Item 3 of the provisional agenda of the Conference)

At the first part of its seventeenth special session, the Trade and Development Board noted proposals for organizational arrangements for the Conference whereby, under rule 62, the Conference would establish a main Committee, open to the participation of all members of the Conference, to consider and report on the matters referred to it by plenary.

Under rule 63, the main Committee could set up such sub-groups as may be required, to consider and report to it on issues referred to them.

(i) Allocation of items

It is proposed that the general debate and all procedural and related matters be taken up in plenary, and that the substantive item (item 8) be allocated to the main Committee, which would establish sub-groups to consider and report on different issues.

In view of the fact that statements for the record are to be made in the plenary, the report of the main Committee should be a brief communiqué-type report which transmits to the plenary the action recommended by the Committee and its sub-groups as a result of their deliberations.

(j) Officers of sessional bodies

Under rule 65 of the rules of procedure of the Conference, the main Committee is to elect a Chairman, a Vice-Chairman and a Rapporteur. Under rule 17, the Chairman of the main Committee is to be elected before the Vice-Presidents of the Conference and, under rule 22, shall be a member of the Bureau of the Conference.

(k) Meetings facilities

The total meetings facilities would be distributed, as required, among the plenary, the main Committee and other sessional bodies, it being understood that a maximum of three official meetings with full interpretation would be held simultaneously. Limited facilities would also be available for group meetings.

(l) Timetable of proceedings

At the beginning of its proceedings, the Conference would have before it a timetable to which it would be invited to adhere in order to utilize fully the available resources and facilities. This timetable would make adequate allowance for meetings of regional groups.

(m) Report of the Trade and Development Board to the Conference

The reports of the Board to the General Assembly on the first and second parts of its thirty-fourth, thirty-fifth, thirty-sixth and thirty-seventh regular sessions and the first part of its thirty-eighth regular session, as well as its sixteenth and the first and second parts of its seventeenth special session, would be deemed to constitute the report of the Board to the Conference at its eighth session, in accordance with section II, paragraph 2, of General Assembly resolution 1995(XIX).

(n) Friends of the Rapporteur

In the preparation of the draft report, the Rapporteur of the Conference would be assisted by a group of "Friends of the Rapporteur", the composition of which would follow the same geographical distribution as that of the similar group at previous sessions of the Conference (two members from Africa, two from Asia, two from Latin America, two from List B, two from List D and one from China.)

(o) Format of the report of the Conference

The format of the report of the Conference on its eighth session would follow that of the reports on its earlier sessions, and would thus consist of three parts: part one would relate to the action taken by the Conference; part two would contain an account of the proceedings of the Conference, including summaries of statements made in the general debate; and part three would contain a succint account of organizational and procedural matters. The final report would also include the customary annexes.

Item 3 - Report of the Pre-Conference Meeting of Senior Officials to the Conference

The Meeting of Senior Officials may wish to authorize the Chairman of the Meeting to prepare a brief report on the recommendations agreed upon by the Meeting of Senior Officials. The Chairman would be invited to present his report to the Conference for consideration at its opening plenary meeting.